General Assembly

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Agenda item 35

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/56/L.46 and Add.1)*]

56/96. Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind the indissoluble links between the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] and the foundations of any democratic society,

Recalling its resolution 49/30 of 7 December 1994, in which it recognized the importance of the Managua Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the Second International Conference of New or Restored Democracies in July 1994,[2] as well as its resolutions 50/133 of 20 December 1995, 51/31 of 6 December 1996, 52/18 of 21 November 1997, 53/31 of 23 November 1998, 54/36 of 29 November 1999 and 55/43 of 27 November 2000,

Recalling also the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted by heads of State and Government on 8 September 2000,[3] in particular paragraphs 6 and 24 thereof,

Recalling further the declarations and plans of action of the four international conferences of new or restored democracies adopted in Manila in 1988, Managua in 1994, Bucharest in 1997 and Cotonou in 2000,

Recalling that the Fourth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies focused on peace, security, democracy and development,

Considering the major changes taking place on the international scene and the aspirations of all peoples for an international order based on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including the promotion and encouragement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all and other important principles, such as respect for the equal rights and self-determination of peoples,

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).
[2] A/49/713, annexes I and II.
[3] See resolution 55/2.

peace, democracy, justice, equality, the rule of law, pluralism, development, better standards of living and solidarity,

Expressing its deep appreciation to the Government of Benin for the generous manner in which it hosted and provided facilities for the Fourth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies,

Bearing in mind that the activities of the United Nations carried out in support of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate democracy are undertaken in accordance with the Charter and only at the specific request of the Member States concerned,

Taking note with satisfaction of the seminars, workshops and conferences on democratization and good governance convened in 2001, as well as those held under the auspices of the International Conference of New or Restored Democracies,

Taking note of the views expressed by Member States in the debate on this question at its forty-ninth to fifty-sixth sessions,

Bearing in mind that democracy, development and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing and that democracy is based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and on their full participation in all aspects of their lives,

Noting that a considerable number of societies have recently undertaken significant efforts to achieve their social, political and economic goals through democratization and the reform of their economies, pursuits that are deserving of the support and recognition of the international community,

Expressing its deep appreciation for the support provided by Member States, the United Nations system, including the specialized agencies, and other intergovernmental organizations to the Government of Benin for the holding of the Fourth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,[4] and its focus on the Cotonou Declaration, and the final report adopted by the Fourth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies in Cotonou on 6 December 2000,[5]

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General;[4]

2. *Encourages* Member States to promote democratization and to make additional efforts to identify possible steps to support the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies;

3. *Welcomes* the work carried out by the intergovernmental follow-up mechanism to the Fourth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies;

4. *Invites* Member States, the relevant specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations system, and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to contribute actively to the follow-up to the Fourth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies;

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[4] A/56/499.

[5] See A/55/889, annex.

5. *Recognizes* that the United Nations has an important role to play in providing timely, appropriate and coherent support to the efforts of Governments to achieve democratization within the context of their development efforts;

6. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to continue to improve the capacity of the Organization to respond effectively to the requests of Member States by providing coherent and adequate support for their efforts to achieve the goals of good governance and democratization;

7. *Stresses* that the activities of the Organization must be undertaken in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

8. *Commends* the Secretary-General, and through him the United Nations system, for the activities undertaken at the request of Governments to support efforts to consolidate democracy;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to examine options for strengthening the support provided by the United Nations system for the efforts of Member States to consolidate democracy, including the designation of a focal point;

10. *Welcomes* the decision of the Government of Mongolia to host the Fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies in 2003;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

12. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies".

86th plenary meeting
14 December 2001